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HISTORY

OF THE

Twelfth Baptist Church,

BOSTON, MASS.,

FROM 1840 TO 1874.

WITH A

STATEMENT AND APPEAL IN BEHALF
OF THE CHURCH.

BY THE PASTOR,

REV. GEORGE W. WILLIAMS.



BOSTON:
JAMES H. EARLE,
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Press of Rockwell & Churchill, Boston.

TO

ALL WHO REVERE THE MEMORY OF

Leonard Andrew Grimes,

FOR MORE THAN A QUARTER OF A CENTURY THE LOVING
PASTOR OF THE TWELFTH BAPTIST CHURCH,

THIS VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

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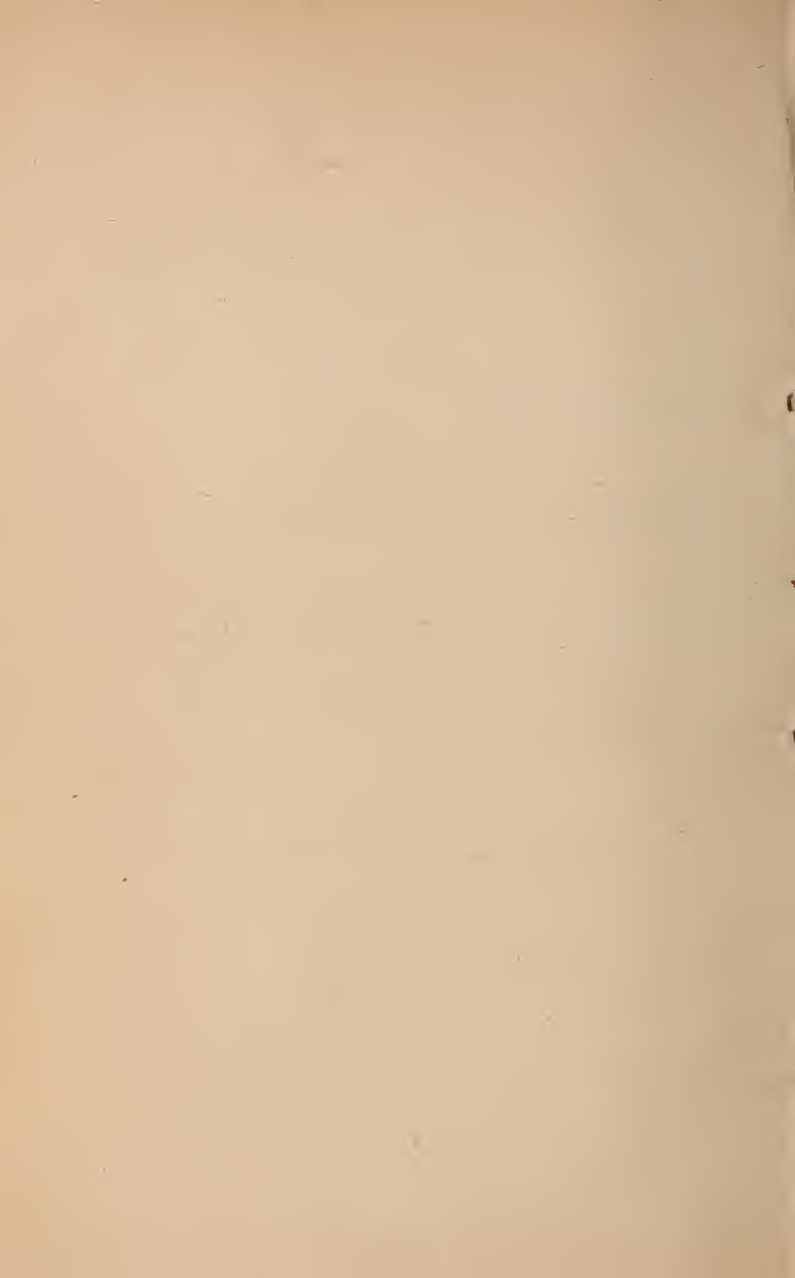
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P R E F A C E .

I SUPPOSE if a man writes a book he ought to be able to state his reasons for so doing. That is what I now desire to do. I have been beguiled into this — anything but pleasant task, especially during the summer months. But the palpable and imperative wants of the church over which I am settled may serve, in some degree, to palliate the many faults herein found. I am sure that nothing could induce me to give this book to the public, save the hope that it may be the means of serving the church financially, for which it was written, and bring its pressing wants before the benevolent public.

I have striven simply to narrate the history of an humble, though pious people. It distresses me to call it a “history;” I wish I knew what to call it.

I have not endeavored to write a history of Mr. Grimes. I might have devoted the whole book to him, and then there would be much unsaid. But

this work will be done some day, I trust, by an abler and more eloquent pen; — for a better subject for a history can scarcely be imagined.

I submit this book to the reading public, not for justice, — for I am afraid that is what it will get, — but that it may publish the wants of as needy a church as ever came before the Christian public.

May the blessing of the Divine Master rest upon it, and may the friends of Christianity, everywhere, be charitable in their judgment, but generous in their gifts. “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth.”

G. W. W.

26 AUBURN ST., BOSTON, August, 1874.

HISTORY

OF THE

TWELFTH BAPTIST CHURCH.



CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH.

It was sometime during the year 1840, when disputings arose — about what, I do not know — within the membership of what was known as the “First Independent Baptist Church,” which resulted in the drawing out from the same of about forty members. This party was led by the Rev. Mr. Black, who had been, for some time, pastor of the church he now left. They secured a place of worship in Smith Court, off of Joy street, where they continued for a considerable space of time. It was not long, however, after they began to worship in their new home, before their highly esteemed and venerable leader was stricken down with disease, from which he subsequently died.

This little band was now without a leader, and was, consequently, speedily rent by a schism within its own circle. But in the nucleus that finally became the Twelfth Baptist Church there were faithful men and women who believed in the integrity of their cause,

and, therefore, stood firm. They believed that He who was for them was greater than all they who were against them. Though few in number, they felt that "one shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight," was a very pertinent passage when applied to themselves. And those who have been blessed to see that little "company of believers" grow to be an exceedingly large and prosperous church of Christ must be persuaded that God alone gave "the increase."

For a long time this little company struggled on without a leader. They were called upon to walk through many discouraging scenes, and to humble themselves under the remorseless hand of poverty. Unable to secure, permanently, the services of a clergyman, they were driven to the necessity of obtaining whomsoever they could when the Sabbath came. And what a blessed thing it was for them that they were placed under the severe discipline of want! It taught them humility and faith, — lessons often so hard to acquire. They bore their trials heroically, and esteemed it great joy to be counted worthy to suffer for Christ. When one Sabbath was ended they knew not whom the Lord would send the next; and yet they never suffered for the "Word of God." For He who careth for the lilies of the field, and bears up the falling sparrow, fed them with the "bread of life," and gave them to drink of the waters of salvation. "Unto the poor the Gospel was preached."

After a few years of pain and waiting, after the watching and praying, the hoping and fearing, God

seemed pleased to hear the prayers of this lonely band, and give them a leader. It was whispered in the community that a very intelligent and useful man, by the name of "Grimes," of New Bedford, could be retained as their leader. After some deliberation upon the matter, they chose one of their number to pay a visit to "Bro. Leonard A. Grimes, of New Bedford," and on behalf of the company worshipping in "an upper room," on Belknap street, — now Joy street, — Boston, extend him an invitation to come and spend a Sabbath with them. In accordance with their request, he paid them a visit. Impressed with the dignity of his bearing and the earnestness of his manner, the company was unanimous in an invitation, inviting "the young preacher" to return and remain with them for "three months."

The invitation was accepted with alacrity, and the work begun with a zeal worthy of the subsequent life of "the beloved pastor of the Twelfth Baptist Church." Bro. L. A. Grimes had been driven North on account of his friendly and humane relations to the oppressed. He had been incarcerated by laws of slave-holding Virginia, for wresting from her hand, and piloting into the land of freedom, those whom Slavery had marked as her children, — or, rather, her "*goods*." A soul like his was too grand to live in such an atmosphere. In keeping the golden rule, he had insulted the laws of the institution under whose merciless sway thousands of human beings were groaning. He would live no longer where his convictions of duty were to be subor-

dinated to, and palliated by, the penurious and cruel teachings of the slave institution. So, after having been robbed of his property, he left, in company with his family, for the fair shores of New England. He had sought no distinction, but had settled down to a quiet life in New Bedford. But a man of his worth could not stay in the quiet walks of life; he was born to lead, and heard God call him to the work his soul loved.

His quiet, unpretentious ministry of "three months" shadowed forth the loving, gentle, yet vigorous and successful ministry of a quarter of a century; a ministry so like the Master's, not confined to sect or nationality, limited only by the wants of humanity and the great heart-love that went gushing out to friend and foe. Those who were so happy as to sit under his ministry for the "three months" were quite unwilling to be separated from one whose ministry had so greatly comforted and built them up. In the young preacher they had found a leader of excellent judgment, a pastor of tender sympathies, and a father who loved them with all the strength of true manly affection. How could they retain him? They were poor. How could they release him? They loved him. After much prayer and pleading, Bro. Grimes was secured as their leader, with a salary at the rate of \$100 per annum. He returned to New Bedford and moved his family to Boston. His salary barely paid his rent, but by working with his hands, as Paul did, and through the frugal industry of his wife, he was enabled to get along.

good

During all this time this little company of believers was without "church organization." At length a council was called and their prayer for organization presented. After the procedure common to such councils, it was voted that this company of Christian men and women be organized as the "Twelfth Baptist Church." The church consisted of twenty-three members.

On the evening of the 24th of November, 1848, occurred the services of the recognition of the church, and the ordination of Rev. L. A. Grimes as its pastor. The order of exercises was as follows:—

Reading of Scriptures and prayer, by the Rev. Edmund Kelley; sermon, by the Rev. J. Banvard; subject, "The way of salvation," from Acts xvi. 17: "The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation;" hand of fellowship to the church, by the Rev. T. F. Caldicott; prayer of recognition and ordination by the Rev. John Blain; charge to the candidate, by the Rev. Nathaniel Colver; address to the church, by the Rev. Rollin H. Neale; concluding prayer, by the Rev. Sereno Howe; benediction by the pastor, Rev. Leonard A. Grimes.

The exercises were of a very pleasant nature and of great interest to the humble little church that assembled to enjoy them. It was an occasion of no small moment that published to the world the "Twelfth Baptist Church," and sent upon a mission of love and

mercy, Leonard Andrew Grimes ! It was an occasion that has brought great strength to the colored people of Boston, yea, of the country ! It was the opening of a door ; it was the loosening of chains, the beginning of a ministry that was to stretch over a period of twenty-five years, carrying peace and blessing to men in every station. And may we not, with propriety, halt upon the threshold of our gratitude, and thank that wise Being who gave him, a blessing to the church, a friend to humanity ?

Happy, thrice happy, was the little church that had wedded itself for life to one who had laid himself upon the altar of their common cause. These relations and manifold responsibilities were not hastily or rashly assumed. The little church felt keenly its poverty and weakness, while its new pastor knew that the road to prosperity lay through fields of toil and up heights of difficulty. Before *him* was no dark future, for the light of an extraordinary faith scattered the darkness as he advanced to duty. What man of intelligence, without capital or social influence, would have undertaken so discouraging a project as that to which Leonard A. Grimes unconditionally brought the sanctified zeal of a loving heart ? To him it was purely a matter of *duty*, and it was this thought that urged him on with his almost superhuman burdens.

But let us return to the "upper chamber," and take one more look at the happy little church. It was not the pastor's object to begin at once to perfect plans to secure a place more desirable to worship in than

their present little room. His heart longed for that enlargement of soul secured by a nearness to the divine Master. His heart yearned after those who were enemies to the "*cross of Christ*." His first prayer was, "O Lord, revive thy work!" and it was not offered in vain. A season of prayer was instituted for the outpouring of the Spirit. The pastor led the way to the throne of grace in a fervent and all-embracing prayer. A spirit of prayer fell upon his people. Every heart trembled in tenderest sympathy for those who were strangers to the "*covenant of mercy*;" every eye was dampened with tears of gratitude and love; every tongue was ready to exclaim with Watts: —

"'Twas the same love that spread the feast
That sweetly forced us in;
Else we had still refused to taste,
And perished in our sin."

The church had reached that point in feeling where the blessing is sure. They heard the coming of the chariot, and felt the saving power of the Lord in their midst. It was a glorious revival. There were more converted than there were members in the church. Oh, what joy, what peace, what comfort in the Holy Ghost, was there in that "*upper chamber*"! What tongue or pen can describe the scene in that room when over thirty souls were gathered into the fold! A pastor's *first* revival! What rejoicing! The gathering of his first children in the Lord! Ask Paul what conscious pride he took in those who were his "*epistles*," his "*fruit in the Gospel*," his "*children*"

in Christ Jesus. It lifted Bro. Grimes up to the heights of Pisgah in his rejoicing, and laid him low at the cross in his humility. "The Lord had done great things for him, whereof he was glad;" And they "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

The rooms in which they began now proved too small for their rapidly increasing membership. They agreed to have a building of their own. It was now the latter part of 1848. The business eye of the pastor fell upon a lot on Southac street; and in the early part of 1849 the trustees purchased it. Preparations for building were at once begun. It seemed a large undertaking for a body of Christians so humble in circumstances, so weak in numbers. But faith and works were the genii that turned the tide of prosperity in their favor. They decided that the ground and edifice should not exceed in cost the sum of \$10,000. The society purposed to raise two or three thousand within its own membership; three thousand by loan, and solicit the remainder from the Christian public. Previous to this period the public knew little or nothing of this society. Bro. Grimes had come to Boston almost an entire stranger, and had now to undertake the severe task of presenting the interests of a society so obscure and of so recent date. But he believed in his cause, and knew that success would come. He had known Dr. Neale in Washington City, during his

early ministry; they were boys together. They met. It was a pleasant meeting. The Rev. Mr. Neale vouched for him before the public. It was not particularly necessary, for Bro. Grimes carried a handsome recommendation in his face. It was written all over with veracity and benevolence.

Joyfully and successfully he hurried on his mission. He made friends of the enemies of evangelical religion, and gathered a host of admirers around him. The public saw in him not only the zealous pastor of an humble little church, but the true friend of humanity. The public ear was secured; his prayer was answered in the munificent gifts that came in from every direction. Every person seemed anxious to contribute something to this noble object.

It was a beautiful morning! The sun never shone brighter, nor the air smelt sweeter or purer than on that memorable 1st day of August, 1850. The first persons to usher themselves into the street that morning were the happy members of the "*Twelfth Baptist Church*." Every face told of the inward joy and peace of thankful hearts. Those who had toiled long through the days of the church's "small things" felt that their long-cherished hopes were beginning to bud.

Long before the appointed hour the members and friends of the church began to gather to participate in the "laying of the corner-stone of the Twelfth Baptist Church." It was a sweet, solemn occasion.

"Rev. Drs. Sharp, Neale and Colver, together with

the pastor of the church, officiated on the occasion. The usual documents were deposited with the stone, and the customary proceedings gone through with, in a solemn and impressive manner."

The occasion lent an enthusiasm for the work hitherto unknown. They were emboldened. The future looked bright, and on every hand the times were propitious. Gradually the walls of the edifice grew heavenward, and the building began to take on a pleasing phase. At length the walls had reached their proper height, and the roof crowned all. Their sky was never brighter. It is true that a "little speck of cloud" was seen in the distance; but they were as unsuspicious as children. The cloud approached gradually, and, as it approached, took on its terrible characteristics. It paused a while; it trembled. Then there was a death-like silence in the air, and in a moment it vomited forth its forked lightning, and rolled its thunder along the sky. It was the explosion of a Southern shell over a Northern camp, that was lighted by the torch of ambition in the hands of our fallen Webster. It was the culmination of slave-holding Virginia's wrath. It was invading the virgin territory of liberty-loving Massachusetts. It was hunting the fugitive on free soil, and tearing him from the very embrace of sweet freedom.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH AND THE ANTI-SLAVERY PARTY.

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW.

THE Boston of to-day is not what the Boston of twenty-five years ago was. The whole texture of its social and political organism is radically changed. The negro hadn't any right the white man was bound to respect. Hurried from street-cars, ejected from hotels, crowded from the sidewalks, debarred from schools and churches, every man's hand was upon him. The business community claimed that the intimate relations existing between their "precious capital" and the trade of the South should be maintained at any price, even if that price were in human beings. The church winked at slavery, while the "common herd" followed in the channel of the bitter prejudice that fell upon the defenceless head of the negro. There was but one side, and that was the side of numbers — the popular side. Boston had degenerated since the days of Bradford, Winthrop, Endicott and Hancock. She had forgotten the lessons of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. The lessons of "equality of rights," learned through the long night of the revolutionary struggle, had slipped her memory, and she soon found herself no longer the noble city that defied Old England, with

her armies grasping farthest east, her navy overshadowing the ocean. She was now sitting at the feet of Virginia, while she taught her lessons of inhuman cruelty. She was bound a slave. Knowing, as we well do, the generous impulses of our noble old Boston, it seems so strange that she ever cowered before the oppressor. But such is the verdict of history.

It was in such trying times as these when the Twelfth Baptist Church was called into existence. It was at this time when the Fugitive Slave Law struck the church like a thunderbolt, and scattered the flock. Burns had already been apprehended, and Shadrach, a member of the church, had been seized, but, more fortunate than Burns, effected his escape. Forty or more of the members of the church fled to Canada and the British Provinces, to gain the protection of the British flag. The church was closed; \$4,500 had been expended upon it. It seemed as if they were to lose their house of worship. It was a sad and memorable period. Public sympathy ceased to flow. The hand of charity was paralyzed. The whole North was stunned.

“When the first fury of the storm had blown over, Mr. Grimes set himself, with redoubled energy, to repair the wastes that had been made. He collected money from the charitable, and purchased the members of his church out of slavery, that they might return without fear to the fold. He made friends among the rich, who advanced funds for the completion of his church. At length it was finished, and, as if for an

omen of good, was dedicated on the first day when Burns stood for trial before Mr. Commissioner Loring. In now devoting himself to the ransom of this last victim of the oppressor, he but added one more to the long list of acts that had given character to his whole life." *

Among the many generous contributors to the church was Deacon Asa Wilbur, a worthy member of a sister church. He kindly furnished the slate for the roof. This was in 1855. Through the Lord they had done valiantly. Bro. Grimes had worked heroically, and from the heights of success he could look forth a conqueror. It was for him to rejoice exceedingly, who had sorrowed immeasurably, over the once prostrate and bleeding interests of his church and people. The consummation of his plans, the realization of his hopes, could bring to no other heart such joy, such rest, such honor, such trust, such gratitude.

During the days of the anti-slavery struggle, there seemed to exist in the churches a spirit akin to slavery, or of neutrality, to say the least. The pulpit of those days either preached the righteousness of slavery, or refused to preach against the sin of "man-stealing." It was almost a miracle to find a pulpit or church openly assailing slavery. But it was not so with the Twelfth Baptist Church or pulpit. Their house was not simply dedicated to the service of God in song and prayer and discourse. It was the home of the oppressed, the vantage ground of the champions of human

* Anthony Burns — Stevens — p. 208, chap. xi.

freedom. Garrison, Phillips, Parker and Douglass were turned from the halls of the city; churches refused to have their pulpits desecrated by the doctrines these men taught; but in the Twelfth Baptist Church they obtained a hearing, and were greeted by the friends of freedom. Her gates were open by day and by night. The fugitive was never refused its shelter and protection, or the preacher of the religion of humanity the privilege of officiating in its sacred desk. Every man or woman who taught the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God was ever welcome. In short, this church became the vantage ground of the "new party;" the platform from which slavery was assailed most grandly and fearlessly.

The attitude of the pulpit toward the slave question was not simply contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, but had a tendency to drive conscientious Christians beyond the precincts of the church, and, thereby, swell the ranks of atheists and anti-church-men. The men who were forced to leave the church, by the "commandments and doctrines of men," were the fairest minds of the country. I am not to discuss the justness of their procedure, but simply state the facts in the case. They argued that religion was a religion of humanity; that it was a religion of equality; all men were brothers, and God the father of us all; that it was a religion set for the defence of the weak, the loosing of chains, the opening of prisons, and the deliverance of the bond. Furthermore, they claimed that a Constitution that endorsed, encouraged, fostered

and maintained the slave institution, could not claim the allegiance of true Christian men; and that said Constitution should not receive their support in any respect; that it was better to obey God than man. Consequently, a large number of anti-slavery men were anti-church and anti-constitution men. But none of these things moved the faithful pastor of the Twelfth Baptist Church. He loved and trusted the church of Christ; he loved and trusted the society that had for its object the liberation of his race. He could not fail to see the great sin of omission on the part of the church; but he saw that men were to be blamed, not Christianity. He admired the zeal of anti-slavery men, but he also saw that, in some respects, it was "a zeal not according to knowledge." And during the weary years of the strife that ended in the consummate triumph of right, he never failed to teach his coadjutors that God alone could give victory, while himself and church did not a little to soften the prejudice that was growing so rapidly against the cause of religion.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH DURING AND AFTER THE REBELLION.

THE deadly moral conflict between conscience and duty, between right and might, between bondage and freedom, was only the precursor of the terrible struggle that followed. The hero in the moral conflict was no less a hero in the conflict of arms. The conscience of the Twelfth Baptist Church had been thoroughly educated in the questions of the day. They had heard the Bible-side of the slave question, and were consequently prepared to act in this important moment. No sooner did the President call for troops than many of the church were willing, yea, anxious to go. But the same unjust proscription that kept them from the enjoyment of their civil rights, forbade their enlistment as the "*defenders of the Union.*"

The dear, good pastor, whose heart yearned for every right cause, set himself earnestly to the work of opening up a way into the field for his young men. He was a trusted and esteemed friend of Gov. Andrew, as he was of men in the highest stations of life. He talked with the Governor about the propriety of trusting the honors of the Commonwealth to colored soldiers. The effect of this conversation was not lost. The Governor was a man whose heart naturally loved the cause of humanity, and he, therefore, lent all of his influence to

the work of securing orders from the President to send forth "a colored regiment." The painful hours of beseeching that John A. Andrew spent in the President's ante-room brought forth abundant fruit.

When the time came to enlist colored soldiers, Leonard A. Grimes was as untiring in his vigilance as any friend of the Fifty-fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, while the members of his church were either joining or aiding the regiment. So highly were the services of Bro. Grimes prized that the chaplaincy of the regiment was not only tendered him, but urged upon him; but the multifarious duties of his calling forbade his going with the regiment he loved and revered.

The ladies of his congregation were busy with their needles, thus aiding the cause of the Union; and no church threw its doors open more readily to patriotic meetings than the Twelfth Baptist Church. And during those dark days of the Union, when all seemed hopeless, when our armies were weak and small, the prayers of a faithful pastor and pious people ascended day and night, and did much to strengthen the doubting.

The Fugitive Slave Law and Civil War had done much to weaken the church financially and numerically. Many who fled from the Fugitive Slave Law had not returned; the young men had entered the service of the country, while many others were absent from the city under various circumstances. But notwithstanding all these facts, God blessed the church — even in war times — and many were converted.

The struggle was now ended. "The boys in blue" came home in triumph. The father separated from child, the husband from wife, could now meet again. Those who were driven before the wrath of an impious and cruel edict could now return to the fold without fear. What a happy occasion it was for the whole church! The reunion of a family long separated; the gathering of dispersed disciples. The occasion brought such an undistinguishable throng of fancies — such joy, such hope, such blessed fellowship — as no pen can describe.

At the commencement of the Rebellion the church numbered about 246; and at the close of the Rebellion it numbered about 300, notwithstanding the discouraging circumstances under which she labored. The revivals that followed brought many into the church, and the heart of the pastor was greatly encouraged.

At first it was thought, as before mentioned, that the entire cost of the land and building would not exceed \$10,000; but the whole cost, from the time they began to build until the close of the war, was \$14,044.09. In 1861 the indebtedness of the church was \$2,967.62; at the close of the war it was about \$2,000.

During all these years of financial struggle the church had ever paid her notes with promptness, and without difficulty. And now that the war was over, freedom granted to the enslaved, and the public again breathing easy, the little church, not weary of well-doing, again began the work of removing the remaining debt. The public was sought only in the most extreme

necessity. The ladies held sewing circles, and made, with the needle, fancy articles to be sold in a festival, while the members of the church were contributing articles of wearing apparel, or offering their services at the sale tables. The proceeds were given to the society to pay its debts; and it was no mean gift.

From '65 to '71 the church grew rapidly. Revivals were of frequent occurrence; and many from the South, learning of the good name of Rev. Mr. Grimes, sought his church when coming to Boston. But it was apparent that their once commodious home was now too small. The pastor saw this need, and began to take the proper steps to meet it. It was at length decided that the church undergo repairs; and the pastor was armed with the proper papers to carry forward this work. The gallery that was situated in the east end of the church was used chiefly by the choir and an instrument. In making repairs it was thought wise to remove the organ from the gallery, and put in seats, and thereby accommodate a larger number of people. Then, the old pulpit took up a great deal of room, and by putting in a new pulpit of less dimensions, more room could be secured for pews. This was done, with the addition of a baptistry, the lack of which for near twenty-five years had driven them, in all kinds of weather, to Charles river. Everything, from the basement up, underwent repairs. The pews were painted and furnished with book-racks. The floors were repaired and covered with beautiful carpet, while the walls and ceilings were richly clothed with fresco, by the hands of skilful workmen. In the centre of the ceiling was

an excellent ventilator, from which was suspended a very unique chandelier, with twelve beautiful globes, that were calculated to dispense their mellow light upon the worshippers below. But to crown all this expensive work, and exceeding beauty, thus bestowed upon the house, was the beautiful organ that adorned the southwest corner of the church, just to the pastor's right, when in the pulpit. It was secured for the sum of \$2,500. All was accomplished. The old house of worship was now entirely refitted. No heart was happier than the pastor's the day the church was reopened. It was my good fortune to be present. I remember distinctly his happy face, his words of gratitude and thanks. And, as I looked around me, every face wore an expression of complete satisfaction. The new and elegant organ sent forth its loud peals of music in obedience to the masterly touch of the "*faithful one*," who was never absent from her post of duty for more than twelve years, and whom none of us know but to love and honor.

good | What supreme satisfaction there is in the accomplishment of a work that comprehends, not the interests of an individual, but the interests of the greatest number of human beings! The labors of Bro. Grimes were bestowed upon those whom he loved. He had toiled for his church as a father does to support his family. And no pastor, perhaps, was ever more paternal to his flock than Leonard A. Grimes. He was a man wondrously full of loving-kindness, — a lover of mankind.

It has been the rule rather than the exception, for a

True
long time, for churches to carry heavy debts; and when a church is free from debt, it certainly furnishes a cause of great rejoicing. It was so with the Twelfth Baptist Church. For a long time — more than twenty years — the church had been before the public as an object of charity. For more than twenty years the people had struggled heroically amid all of the storms that gathered around them. Sometimes, as Deacon Sidney says, they expected to see "*the red flag*" upon their house of worship, but through the influence of the above-mentioned brother, and other faithful ones, the flag was never raised. *True*

The debts of the church had all been removed. The house was absolutely free from every incumbrance; the people owned their church.

But the little church of twenty-three had become the large church of six hundred. The once commodious house was now too small for the communicants of the church. The pastor began to look around for a place to build, and considered the matter of enlarging the present house of worship. He had expended the strength of his manhood in the service of his church; he had built one house, and had never denied the public his service. It would seem natural that a man whose life had been so stormy, yea, so full of toil and care, would seek in advanced age, the rest and quiet so much desired at that stage of life. But it was not so with Bro. Grimes. He was willing to begin another life-time work, and with all the freshness of desire and energy of young manhood.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. GRIMES' DEATH.

It was now the latter part of the winter of 1873. A revival had been for a long time, and was still, in progress. Converts were coming into the church rapidly. The heart of the pastor was never fuller of love than during the revival. He seemed to be in agony for sinners to be saved. He impatiently paced the aisles, and held private and personal interviews with the impenitent. He disliked to leave the church after it was out. He remained often in the vestibule, watching for an opportunity to say a word for the Saviour. Bro. C. G. Swan, who preached for him once, said to me, "I never beheld a more heavenly face; it seemed as if his soul were ripe for heaven."

Those who saw him in the pulpit the last Sabbath he spent on earth — March 9th, 1874 — will not soon forget the earnestness and impressiveness of his manner. On Wednesday, March 12th, he left the scene of his labors to discharge a duty nearest to his heart. He took \$100 from his poor church, as a gift to the *Home Mission Society*, that was to be used in the *Freedman's Fund*.

On Friday evening, March 14th, he reached home just in time to breathe his last in the arms of his faith-

ful, though anxious, wife. Thus he fell asleep in the path of duty, in the midst of a mighty work.

The news of his death spread rapidly, and cast a shadow of grief over the entire community. The people mourned him.

The morning papers gave full account and notice of his death. The following is one of the many notices that were given: —

“DEATH OF AN ESTEEMED CLERGYMAN.

“The Rev. L. A. Grimes, the well-known and universally esteemed colored clergyman, died very suddenly last evening, at his residence on Everett Avenue, East Somerville. He had just returned from New York, where he had been to attend the meeting of the *Baptist Board* of Home Missions, of which he was a member. He had walked to his home from the cars, and died within fifteen minutes after his arrival. The physicians pronounce it a case of apoplexy. Mr. Grimes was pastor of the Twelfth Baptist Church, on Phillips street, in this city. During the twenty-six years of his ministry in Boston he had won the confidence and regard, not only of his own sect, but of the entire community. His labors for the good of his oppressed race attracted public attention to him more than twenty years ago, and this interest manifested itself in the generous contributions of Unitarians, Episcopalians and Universalists in aid of his church. During the thirty-four dark days of the infamous Fugitive Slave Law, and the excitements occasioned by slave hunts in Boston,

Mr. Grimes had a 'level head,' and did much to keep down riotous outbreaks from those who then were told that they had no rights that white men were bound to respect. Fortunate, indeed, will be the church of the deceased, if his successor, like him, shall be able to keep them together, and lead them in righteous ways for a quarter of a century."

On the following Monday morning, at the ministers' meeting, appropriate remarks were made, and resolutions drawn up. The following appeared in the daily papers: —

“BAPTIST MINISTERS' MEETING.

“The Monday-morning meeting of the Baptist ministers of Boston and vicinity was held at ten o'clock, Monday, as is the weekly custom. After the devotional exercises, the committee to prepare resolutions on the death of the late Rev. Leonard Andrew Grimes made their report to the meeting. Pending the acceptance of the report remarks eulogizing the deceased were made by Rev. R. H. Neale, D. D., and others. The resolutions, which were thereupon given a place upon the records of the meeting, are as follows: In the death of Leonard Andrew Grimes, for twenty-seven years the pastor of the Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston, the city in which he lived, the race for which he labored have sustained an irreparable loss. The *confrère* of Daniel Sharp, Baron Stow, Phineas Stow, Nathaniel Colver, Rev. Mr. Graves of the 'Reflector,'

he was one whose coming might always be welcomed with the exclamation of our Saviour concerning Nathanael: 'Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile.' His last efforts were put forth for his race. He carried to the Board of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, of which he had been for many years an honored member, a large contribution from his church, to help on Christ's work among the Freedmen, and, on returning from New York, stopped at New Bedford to comfort a broken-hearted mother, whose little child was dying, and then came to the city, and in fifteen minutes after crossing the threshold of his home passed on to God.

"His death affected the ministry and churches as when 'a standard-bearer fainteth.' His familiar face was ever welcome. His resolute bearing, his unswerving fidelity to Christ, to truth, to the church at large, and his own denomination in particular, and his life-long service as a philanthropist, his devotion to the interests of the negro, to whom he was linked by ties of consanguinity and of sympathy, made him a felt power for good in our State and in our entire country. No man among us was more sincerely respected or more truly loved. His departure, while it came none too soon for the tired warrior, impoverishes us with the withdrawal of an all-embracing love, and leaves God's poor to suffer to an extent it is impossible to describe.

"*Resolved*, That the death of this good minister of Jesus Christ imposes heavy responsibilities upon his surviving brethren. The interests of the race of which

he was an honored representative are imperilled. Their noble champion has gone up higher; but no waiting Elisha saw the ascent, and cried, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof;' so who can hope to wear his mantle and continue his work?

"*Resolved*, That we tender to his afflicted widow, and to the church he had so long and faithfully served, this poor expression of our sympathy, and this truthful evidence of our love.

"*Resolved*, That the good of his race, just passing from the morning of emancipation into the noonday radiance of a liberty of which they have dreamed, and for which they have prayed, demands that a permanent record be made of this noble man of God."

The ministers' meeting adjourned after the reading of the foregoing resolutions, to attend the funeral services, which were to take place in Charles-street Church. At an early hour in the morning the body was placed in front of the altar in the church of the deceased, where it lay in state all the forenoon, and where appropriate services were conducted by Drs. Cheney, Fulton and others. Thousands, of every grade and hue, thronged the church to have a last fond look at the face so full of sunlight in life, and so peaceful in death.

At one o'clock the remains were removed to Charles-street Church, where the funeral services were conducted with a feeling of solemnity and impressiveness worthy of the sad occasion. The addresses of Drs.

Neale and Fulton were full of tenderness and grief. Both of these gentlemen were, for many years, the intimate friends of the deceased. They were all associated together in a noble work, for a number of years, and there were no hearts so sad as those of Bros. Neale and Fulton. Clergymen of every denomination were present, and the congregation contained men and women from all the walks of life. The funeral was considered one of the largest that ever took place in Boston.

On the following Sabbath quite a number of the Boston pulpits gave appropriate discourses upon the "Life and Character of the late L. A. Grimes." The most noticeable were those delivered by Rev. R. H. Neale, D. D., Rev. Justin D. Fulton, D. D., and Rev. Henry A. Cook.

CHAPTER V.

CALL AND SETTLEMENT OF GEORGE W. WILLIAMS.

THE pulpit of the Twelfth Baptist Church was supplied for several months through the kindness of Bro. Mark Salom. Some time in May, 1873, he sailed for Europe, and in this event the church sought my services. I was unable, however, to remain with the church more than two Sabbaths, when I left for a trip through several of the Southern States, returning by the way of Chicago. The pulpit was supplied during my absence by ex-Chaplain Carlton. While in Chicago I received the following invitation to supply the pulpit : —

12 TREMONT STREET, BOSTON, Aug. 18, 1873.

REV. GEO. W. WILLIAMS,

339 Third avenue, Chicago, Illinois : —

DEAR SIR, — At a special meeting of the Twelfth Baptist Church, it was voted that you be invited to fill the pulpit of that society for eight months, from September, 1873. It was also voted that the salary for that service be fixed at the rate of \$50 per month; and I was instructed to inform you of this action, and request your early reply.

With highest regard, I remain

Fraternally yours,

GEORGE L. RUFFIN,

Church Clerk.

I returned recruited and rested from a vacation of three months, and on the first Sabbath in September I began to supply the pulpit of the society.

One might naturally think that a church led for near a generation by a beloved and loving pastor — a pastor loved with such holy intensity — would not soon settle upon another leader, but scatter. Not so with this church! Thanks to our heavenly Father, thanks to brethren and sisters of this church, for the unanimity of feeling and harmony of effort which have been so conspicuous since I came among the people so long led by our dear brother Grimes. During the year the church has steadily increased in numbers, and I trust in a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every month persons have joined us either by letter or experience. The prayer-meetings have been largely attended and full of interest. The preaching services have never been more fully attended than this year.

Having supplied the pulpit up to the time specified in the invitation, I received the following “call” from the church: —

BOSTON, April 4, 1874.

BRO. GEORGE W. WILLIAMS:—

DEAR BROTHER, — At a very large meeting of the society of the Twelfth Baptist Church, held on the 31st ult., it was voted to extend an invitation to you to take the pastoral charge of the church, and become the leader of this flock, so long without a shepherd.

The field of usefulness here is almost as boundless, and the opportunity to do good as extended, as the most zealous and energetic worker could wish for. We have every reason to believe, from what we have seen of your ministrations among us during the past few months, that the well-begun work of your predecessor, Bro. Grimes, who, for more than twenty years, labored incessantly and heroically for the upbuilding of Zion, and was never tired, but always ready and anxious to do more, will receive no detriment at your hands; but will be carried forward to the extent of your ability.

Such is our hope and belief, and we indulge the thought that you will unite with us in praying that that hope and belief may be well founded. . . .

Please accept our kindest wishes for your health and happiness, and receive from us the expressions of Christian fellowship, in behalf of the church; and we have the honor to subscribe ourselves,

Yours fraternally,

JAMES T. SIDNEY,
JOHN C. DUNLOP,
THOMAS R. WATSON,
WILLIAM ALLEN,
GEO. L. RUFFIN.

I graduated from "*Newton*" Wednesday, June 10th, and was examined by the council called by the church to which I belonged, at Watertown, Thursday afternoon, June 11th, and was ordained in the evening. The following was the order of exercises: —

VOLUNTARY.

Miss Clara Cate.

DOXOLOGY.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

INVOCATION.

Rev. Alexander Ellis, Boston.

HYMN.

"Oh, where are kings and empires now?"

READING OF SCRIPTURES.

PRAYER.

Rev. S. W. Foljambe, Malden.

HYMN.

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow."

SERMON.

Rev. Galusha Anderson, D. D., Brooklyn, N. Y.

PRAYER OF ORDINATION.

Rev. S. L. Caldwell, D. D., Newton Centre.

HYMN.

BY REV. GRANVILLE S. ABBOTT.

Oh, the mystery of the ages,
 Baffling thought of wisest man;
 Undiscovered by the sages,
 Who have guessed Jehovah's plan.
 He knows all things —
 Knows each secret that we scan.

Ethiopia's hands long stretching,
 Mightily have plead with God;
 Plead not vainly: time is fetching
 Answers as her faith's reward.
 God is faithful,
 Yea and Amen is his word.

Countless prayers, so long ascending,
 Have their answer here and now;
 Threads of purpose, wisely meeting
 In an ordination vow,
 Afric brother,
 To thy mission humbly bow.

Thou hast calling, where another
 Served his Master long and well;
 Loved his people like a father,
 With a love no grief could quell.
 Take his mantle,
 And thy work the earth shall tell.

To the sinful, herald Jesus,
 To the heart that's sad and sore;
 His the love that bleeding frees us
 From a worse than tyrant's power.
 Blessed Gospel,
 Preach forever, evermore.

HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

Rev. G. S. Abbott, Watertown.

CHARGE.

Rev. O. S. Stearns, D. D., Newton Centre.

HYMN.

“Come, thou Almighty King.”

BENEDICTION.

Rev. Geo. W. Williams.

I can never forget the tenderness with which my dear pastor spoke his hearty and all-embracing fellowship. And how can I forget the happy home I found for four years among the good friends at Watertown! How can I forget dear Blodgett, whose devotion to and care for me are worthy of more explicit mention, and the never-ceasing and never-tiring charities of the Marches and Gilkey will never be forgotten.

On Wednesday, June 24th, I was installed as pastor of the church. The order of exercises was as follows : —

ORGAN VOLUNTARY. —

INVOCATION.

Rev. James Upham, D. D., Chelsea.

SINGING.

“Go preach my Gospel, saith the Lord.”

READING OF SCRIPTURES.

Rev. Alexander Ellis, Boston.

PRAYER.

Rev. G. S. Abbott, Watertown.

SINGING.

“How beauteous are their feet!”

SERMON.

Rev. George C. Lorimer, D. D., Boston.

SINGING.

“Spirit of peace and holiness.”

PRAYER OF INSTALLATION.

Rev. J. N. Murdock, D. D., Boston.

CHARGE TO THE CANDIDATE.

Rev. D. C. Eddy, D. D., Boston.

HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

Rev. J. T. Beckley, Boston.

CHARGE TO THE CHURCH.

Rev. R. H. Neale, D. D., Boston.

PRAYER.

Rev. W. V. Garner, Boston.

SINGING.

“We bid thee welcome in the name
Of Jesus, our exalted Head :”

DOXOLOGY.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow ;
Praise him, all creatures here below ;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host ;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

BENEDICTION.

By the Pastor, Rev. George W. Williams.

On Friday evening, June 26th, the church gave me a reception. The exercises consisted of reading the Scriptures and prayer by the pastor; singing of familiar hymns by the congregation, interspersed with choice pieces by the choir. An address of welcome was delivered by Hon. George L. Ruffin. Bro. Ruffin said that during the last decade many changes had taken place among, and great progress had been made by,

he colored people. Men of color had gone into mercantile pursuits, and into the Congress of the Republic. But the change in the ministry of the day he regarded as a sign of great promise to the race. He said, you remember the colored minister who has been in our churches so long. He was a character, and, though pious, was lacking in many qualities of mind so necessary to the ministry of to-day. We welcome the day that brings to our pulpits an educated ministry, to lead the people in righteous ways. The wants of our people are greater to-day than at any period in the past.

We are met this evening to welcome our pastor to this large field of usefulness, to our public meetings, and to our social circles. And, in behalf of this society, I give you this right hand of fellowship.

The pastor then responded in a brief address, in which he spoke of the work before the church, the measures to be employed in its accomplishment, and concluded by asking the co-operation of every member, and the blessing of Heaven to rest upon their labors.

A beautiful piece was then admirably rendered by the choir, and Mrs. Josephine Ruffin was then introduced and read a poem written for the occasion, which we give : —

WELCOME TO OUR PASTOR.

BY ELIJAH W. SMITH.

1.

Lift up thy voice, O Israel,
And sing Jehovah's praise,
And high on Zion's outer wall
Thy sacred banners raise ;

Though mingled with our songs of joy
 A mournful strain is heard,
 His rock is our abiding-place,
 Our anchor is His word!

2.

How like a bolt from cloudless skies
 Our great bereavement fell!
 Stunned and bewildered at the blow
 We shrank 'neath sorrow's spell;
 Till from within the gloomy cloud
 We heard the joyful sound,
 "Arise, pursue thy heavenward way,
 A leader has been found!"

3.

We thank Thee for the sainted one,
 Who raised thy standard high,
 When threatening clouds obscured the sun,
 And lightnings filled the sky:
 Who, mid oppression's dreary night,
 Mid fetter, gag and rod,
 Sang, louder than the tempest's roar,
 The songs of Israel's God!

4.

His work is here! these very walls
 Have heard his loving voice;
 'Tis here he wept with those that mourned;
 Bade ransomed souls rejoice;
 'Tis here he called, in earnest tones,
 The sinner from the snare;
 'Tis here he brought the blessing down
 By faithful, fervent prayer!

5.

And in our heart of hearts his name
 Enshrined shall ever be;
 Still with the inward eye of faith
 His kindly smile we see;

Our reverence for his deeds of love
 Time never can efface,
 While memory retains its throne,
 And reason holds its place !

6.

Oh, may the mantle of his grace
 Upon *thy* shoulders fall ;
 And may the wanderers from the flock
 List to thy homeward call,
 Till, gathered in the peaceful fold,
 Their tribulations o'er,
 They follow thee through pastures green
 To Canaan's happy shore.

7.

O Thou who strengthened David's arm
 Before Philistia's host,
 And by Thy power brought to naught
 The haughty pagan's boast,
 Strengthen our youthful pastor now
 To meet the giant Wrong ;
 Create him, by Thy righteousness,
 A leader true and strong !

8.

Bless Thou the handmaiden whose lot
 Is woven with his own :
 Grant that the buds of love's young dream
 In perfect flowers be blown :
 And should their bark, on life's broad sea,
 By angry waves be stayed,
 Say to them, from the tempest-cloud,
 "'Tis I, be not afraid !"

9.

With hearts and hands we welcome thee
 To this, thy chosen field ;
 Oh, may the seed in God's name sown,
 Abundant harvests yield !

Gird we anew our armor on,
 Nor seek for soft repose,
 Until the wilderness of sin
 Shall blossom as the rose !

10.

Thou comest laden with the fruits
 Plucked from fair learning's tree,
 Which, moistened by celestial dews,
 Bloom through eternity.
 Oh, give with free, unsparing hand,
 From out thy bounteous store,
 That the poor fainting, famished soul
 May never hunger more !

11.

Take thou the Standard ; lead us on
 While Error holds its sway ;
 Bear thou the torch to guide our steps
 Till dawns the perfect day :
 Till mid the loud, triumphant notes
 The heavenly choir sings,
 "The sun of righteousness shall rise
 With healing in his wings !"

The poem was well rendered, and added to the well-earned reputation of Mrs. Ruffin as a reader.

Remarks were then made by Bro. Sidney, the senior deacon of the church. After the church and congregation had joined in singing the long-metre doxology, the benediction was pronounced.

The audience repaired to the vestry, and, after a social chat had been indulged in, it was announced by Bro. Gaskins, that our presence was desired in the "Social Hall" below. Here we were feasted upon the "necessaries" of life, and ended the evening enjoyment in eating ice-cream and strawberries.

CHAPTER VI.

INTRODUCTORY SERMON.

DELIVERED BY THE PASTOR, JUNE 28, 1874.

“ SAY NOT YE, THERE ARE YET FOUR MONTHS, AND THEN COMETH HARVEST? BEHOLD, I SAY UNTO YOU, LIFT UP YOUR EYES, AND LOOK ON THE FIELDS; FOR THEY ARE WHITE ALREADY TO HARVEST. AND HE THAT REAPETH RECEIVETH WAGES, AND GATHERETH FRUIT UNTO LIFE ETERNAL; THAT BOTH HE THAT SOWETH AND HE THAT REAPETH MAY REJOICE TOGETHER.” — *John IV. 35th and 36th verses.*

BRETHREN AND FELLOW-WORKERS IN CHRIST: It is difficult for me to interpret the feelings and emotions born of this hour and occasion. Four years ago this very month I stood, for the first time, upon New England shores; and, for the first time, inhaled the free air of this liberty-loving State, which, if a man breathes, it imparts a feeling of security, and a true manly dignity. The first hand I was permitted to grasp was that of our esteemed brother, Hon. Geo. L. Ruffin, who was at that time a member of that honorable body, — the Legislature of Massachusetts. And the next hand that was extended to me was that of my lamented predecessor, Rev. L. A. Grimes. I remember, with distinctness, the warm welcome he gave me; and, also, the deep interest he at once took in me.

On the evening of the day of my arrival occurred

the 23d anniversary of his settlement. He cordially invited me to be present and to say a word. It was an enjoyable occasion. Afterwards I always found a welcome to his home, and shared his burdens and enjoyed his friendship until the last day of his earthly existence.

After more than a quarter of a century of stern warfare; after hoping and fearing, watching and praying, weeping and loving, — when the venerable old warrior most longed for repose; when he was in the midst of a deep work of grace; when souls were being garnered; and when, like Paul, he was minded to make a prosperous journey to his brethren at the South, for whom he had toiled so long — the Master called him. He fell in harness; with the Gospel trumpet at his lips, which had never given an uncertain sound. You were not the only mourners at his solemn obsequies. The City of Boston, yea, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, mourned his loss, and the dead pastor and humanitarian was lowered to his final resting-place by all the sorrow an afflicted people could bestow upon him, and his soul welcomed to the rest of the people of God.

He came to you in the freshness of his manhood; and your relations were severed only by death.

You have honored me in calling me to fill the pulpit he so long filled, and so well filled; and I am not insensible to the honor thus conferred.

You took him when he was a young man, and kept him until almost every member could call him father. Now you have taken me, in the freshness of young manhood, to carry forward the work he loved and engaged in for so many years.

I feel deeply the importance of my position, the dignity of my calling, and my weakness and imperfection. But one thought comforts and urges me into this vast field; and that is: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. For without me ye can do nothing." This is the grand thought that lifts me up; Christ is to be my sufficiency. I am to abide in Him, and He is to abide in me. We are to be one; and my success as a minister is to be based upon, and measured by, my union with *Christ, the Great Head of the Church*.

But let us turn from these few preliminary remarks to the consideration of the text. The Saviour had just received baptism, overcome the tempter, and had begun to preach. The regions in which we find him were destitute, and in great need of the Gospel. The woman to whom he preached was a fair type of the people inhabiting those regions. With divine tenderness He opened up the mysteries of his Kingdom, and saved the soul of the woman.

The weary humanity that he stopped to rest and refresh at the well of Jacob forgot its infirmities as its Master discoursed upon the spiritual and heavenly. The disciples who, in the mean while, had gone to purchase food for their weary Master, came. They urged Him to eat; but he persistently refused. "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." What does He mean? We cannot understand him. Is not this the same weary Jesus we left sitting upon the well? "Hath any man brought him aught to eat?" the disciples

inquire among themselves. "Jesus saith unto them, 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.'" Thus the Saviour declared what his mission was — "to do the will of Him that sent him, and to finish His work." It was "the will of Him that sent him" that he should do a work of salvation, seek the lost, and call sinners unto repentance.

The mission of the Saviour was pre-eminently one of salvation. He had no other object in view. He came not as a teacher of systems, but as a Saviour mighty to save. And the church of Christ is to carry forward a mission similar to the Saviour's. Let us enter into the consideration of that mission. Let us consider, therefore,

I. THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION.

Christ came to this sinful world with the avowed purpose of saving the lost. His mission was among the destitute and perishing. In short, it was a *mission of salvation*. The church to-day is to carry forward the same work its great Head began. It is not to gather into fashionable societies and committees, favored classes; but to seek its recruits among the repentant Peters and weeping Magdalens. The church is to seek those men and women who have been wrecked upon the coast of modern society; those unfortunate souls that have been allured by false lights, and their fondest hopes at length blighted forever.

The church of to-day is in too much sympathy with the world. It is a difficult matter nowadays to find a

Gospel-church. If a church building is where the multitude can be reached, the pew-holders want to go “*up town*” to get away from “the common people.” And then the edifice must be built so costly that, except the people can dress so fine, or pay so much pew-rent, they are unable to attend; or, if they attempted to attend, they would be made to feel so uncomfortable that they would not come any more. The property of the church is controlled by men of the world; and the pastor is the choice of the pews rather than of the church.

How dissimilar is this to the New Testament idea of a church! These are not churches, but fashionable societies, — a misnomer, a mocking to Christianity!

How many souls perish right under the shadow of such churches! How many people get an incorrect idea of Christianity! How many are cheated out of the blessed communion that belongs to God’s children, just because the church is corrupted and narrowed down to the creeds and doctrines of men!

My brethren, the true mission of the church of Christ is to *seek the lost*. This work of salvation does not stop with the pulpit, but is to be shared by the brethren of the laity. This work does not consist simply in the multiplication of converts. Not in numbers. Bible mathematics differ from our mathematics. “*One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight.*” “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Large congregations at the preaching services on the Lord’s day is no certain indication that the church is gathering souls. The

empty lecture-room, and the lifeless prayer-meeting, during the week, prove that a church is not what it ought to be.

The prayer-meeting is the thermometer of the church; and when it is low, the church is correspondingly low.

What though a church can boast of a large membership, if that membership is inactive, lifeless, dead? The church is a regiment; the pastor is the commanding officer; the deacons are the field-officers; while the members are the non-commissioned officers and privates, who are to reconnoitre the enemy's ground, do picket guard, fatigue duty, look after the sick and dying, and be ever ready to advance at the sound of the Gospel trumpet. As good and faithful soldiers of Christ, we should keep our powder dry and obey orders.

Then, beside the work of watching for souls, there is a duty we owe ourselves. A soldier is not simply to fight, but drill. The Christian is not simply to pray for the conversion of sinners, but for his own growth in grace. It takes quite as much grace to keep as to save. Pride is to be banished, selfishness overcome by a large Christian benevolence, passions silenced, and love for the things of the world displaced by love for the things of Christ. Beside soul-saving, there is *soul-culture*. A soul is saved in a moment, but it takes years of culture and discipline to make it "meet for the Master's use."

The church is a kind of a preparatory school. Here we "see through a glass darkly;" here "we know only in part." We learn our first lessons in love, and in love's labor in the church below we engage, that we may begin that love and labor which are co-extensive

with eternity itself. We are painting a picture of love that needs the finishing touches from that Great Artist who himself is love. We have begun to sing the song of salvation, that is to grow louder and sweeter, until wafted upon heavenly breezes, and swelled by the redeemed of every inhabited clime of the earth. We have begun to knock off the rough angles of our characters, that we may be fit stones for that "building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In short, brethren, we are fitting, adorning, and toning our souls, that there may be heard in heaven no discordant note, when we join that ransomed company, to sing the song of "*Redeeming Love.*"

But with *soul-culture* I would not disparage *man-culture*. What benefits the man benefits the Christian, for the Christian is the highest type of man. I have no place in this discourse for the discussion of the approximate relation of culture to religion; but I will venture a few words in passing upon this very important question, — one of the questions of the day. By *man-culture* I do not mean that the church should educate its members. I believe that it is the province of the State to educate its children. The work of the Church and State is not so dissimilar as some are wont to believe. One deals with moral, spiritual relations, while the other deals with the intellectual and physical. There is a union, and each is stronger for that union. The success of the State will depend upon, and be modified by, the success the church meets with in its department of public labor. If the church gives the

public a loose, insensible conscience, the laws of the State may exhaust themselves upon the people, but in vain; for we must remember that all law is a growth of public sentiment. What the people like, what the people believe, that they will have; for this "government is of the people, by the people, and for the people," — in short, "*the people rule.*"

It is not difficult, therefore, to determine how far the church should go in the work of education, and what the relative importance of that work.

Antecedently and logically, the church's work stands first in importance and effect. Under every true form of government there must rest some definitely defined religious principle. Every government, from the theocracy of Moses to the republic of which we are proud, — our own country, — has rested upon some religious idea. These governments have varied in their conceptions and interpretations of that idea. Their belief and scepticism have been modified by the age and circumstances in which they were born. The more vague and indefinite their religious belief, the more imperfect and false their form of government. While, on the other hand, the more clearly defined and definitely shaped their religious beliefs, the more perfect and true their form of government.

The church is the educator of the human conscience. She should place an open Bible in the hand of every one of her members. The church should be a Sunday school. Every man ought to be a theologian. What a grand thing it would be, if every man, woman and

child was a student of the Word of God! How rapidly the statistics of crime would decrease! Outside of the awful *fact* of sin, *ignorance* is the mother of crime. And in proportion to the religious intelligence in a community will be its happiness, its purity, its peace.

By *man-culture* I do not mean simply a religious education in the abstract. I do not mean that he is simply to understand the Bible, and as soon as that is done let him stop. I believe that it is the duty of a pastor to encourage, countenance, and help culture in every department of life. Whether it be in music, painting, literature or science, he should be at ease, — yea, a teacher. What is nicer than a company of artistic singers in a church? What power there is in the human soul and voice! God means to have us develop. What sweetness and power there is in music! It is said that Mr. Sankey, who travels with the Evangelist Moody, during the recent great revival in Scotland sang more souls into the kingdom of heaven than were brought in by the Gospel.

So, in the department of painting, we see on the canvas the conceptions and language of the artist's soul. Often I have stood alone in a room, studying some painting, until it seemed as if I were talking to a friend, or listening to the voice, or watching the movements of some subject upon the canvas. There is always something in a good painting to feed the soul upon. Being a work of art, coming from the soul, the soul knows its kindred. In literature, including history, you have an

opportunity of culling information and gaining knowledge from almost every source. Here human nature, in all of its manifold manifestations, is spread out before your eyes. An abundant opportunity is offered to mark the marvellous contrast between the best literary productions and the Bible; the customs and manners of the different countries, the shades of their beliefs, etc., etc. In the department of science we will be brought before the different schools, and move among those infinite laws which are the servants of our God. It is peculiarly necessary and desirable that we acquaint ourselves with those laws, that men so frequently say are not only contrary to, but have annihilated, our religious basis, — the Bible. In each department of learning we will find something to corroborate our religion, and to brighten our hope, while we will never find anything sufficient to rob us of our faith.

If a church looks after the spiritual interests of her children, why not have an eye to their *temporal interests*? Many young men grow up in a church, pass through the Grammar and High Schools, without ever computing or knowing the end to be sought in study. The boy does not know whether he is going to school so he will not trouble them at home, whether to acquire knowledge for the sake of knowledge, or because it is popular for boys to go to school. He does not know whether he wants to preach, or teach, be lawyer or doctor. But a boy can never see himself. He does not know what he is fit to do. It is the business of the church to look at such boys and see what is in them.

A boy thinks a great deal of a smile of recognition from "*the old folks.*" It will not hurt a boy to put your hand upon his head and ask him about his success in school, and give him your "*God-speed.*" A pastor ought to be able to tell a boy where his place is in life, and what fitness he will need for it. And if this were done oftener how many more useful and good men would bless the world with their lives! God grant, that even in our midst, many young men and women will be raised up, qualified, and sent forth to bless the world!

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?" The church is too apt to do her work periodically. *It is the duty of the church to look for souls at all times.* We do not cease to eat or sleep because it is summer. Men die in the summer as well as in other seasons of the year. The devil does not relax his zeal because the people are gone to the sea-side. His unnatural heart is busy at all times. He never wearies of his work of destruction. Why cannot the church keep up her zeal for the Master's cause, all through the year? There are souls to be saved at *all times.* Suppose the government ordered all the light-houses on our coasts to be shut up in the summer season. What would become of our commerce? The church of Christ is a light-house upon the great ocean of life, and if she lets her light go out some poor souls may lose their course, and be dashed to pieces upon the rocks of modern infidelity and sin. Let no nerve relax, or muscle loosen in this hand-to-hand fight with sin. Let every man sleep upon his arms, for the enemy may

surprise you before day. Let the words of good old Wesley inspire us for the conflict : —

“ Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And gird your armor on ;
Strong in the strength which God supplies,
Through his eternal Son.”

II. THE FIELD.

Having discussed the *church's mission*, let us now consider the field in which this mission is to be carried forward. I will not say that the *field* is the world, but the *world* is the field. I shall not confine myself, in the discussion of this topic, to the work of the church in the world in general ; but to the field that especially attracts our attention as colored men and women. The position this church occupies to-day in this Commonwealth and country is second to none, as a colored church. The high estimation in which my predecessor was held throughout the country gained for you a reputation and influence of which you have reason to be proud, and which you should never suffer to be wrested from you.

Within these venerable walls, at this altar of mercy, the flying bondman found shelter and protection. And from the kindly lips, now sealed in death, he received words of counsel and comfort. Into this temple, at your altar of prayer, have come and bowed, men from the professions, — yea, from the council chambers of yonder State House. During our civil struggle, the

men whose souls were burdened with the cares of State deemed it an honor and a privilege to hang upon the lips eloquent with the soul-stirring petitions of him who was "*mighty in prayer.*"

At this sacred altar the Phillipses, and Garrisons, and many others who distinguished themselves in the struggle for human freedom, have ministered. I feel that I am standing upon holy ground! Without pride, or vain-gloriously boasting anything of ourselves, let us enter, with joyful hearts, the open door before us. Let us go cheerfully into the new fields now opening before us, and gather lustily in this harvest field, that is waving its golden grain at our very doors. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

The work before us now is quite different from that of a decade, or fifteen years ago. Each year brings with it new cares and responsibilities. New fields are opened up, new questions presented, and new plans suggested. Perhaps there never was a period in the history of this city and community when saving grace was more needed than at present. Your young men and women have increased in a greater ratio during the last decade, — from 1864 to 1874, — than in any previous years. This fact furnishes the ground of increased action and vigilance in this direction.

There are so many temptations thrown around these young people. They set out upon a voyage of pleasure. Their cheery laughter is echoed by the calm waters. On they go; but soon their frail vessel strikes

some treacherous rock, and they are hurried on to destruction.

I often think that half of the misfortune and disgrace which cover some of our fairest daughters and most promising sons is due to the fact of ignorance. Let the older sisters in Christ look after their younger sisters. No matter if they are not your children or relations. Speak a word of counsel and admonition; it will not be in vain. Likewise, ye who are the older brethren of the church take the young men aside occasionally and offer words of advice, tempered with love and wisdom. It is not wise to advise at all times, or under every circumstance; for there are times when men's hearts are closed, and it is impossible to get them open. Do not waste your ammunition. Do not fire until you are ready; and always aim at the heart.

But the most important work will be done by our young people, and those in the prime of life. If there is anything the devil admires, it is a lazy church. Such a church gives him little or no trouble. But I am persuaded that he will have no occasion for admiring this church. There are too many strong young men and women here for that. There are prayer-meetings to be attended; committees on sick, on strangers, on tracts, on religious interest in the community, and on other interests, to be filled. The field is very large and the work complex and varied. Not the most feeble Christian can find "*nothing to do.*" The pastor and deacons cannot do your work; they have their own duties to discharge. Each brother has his work to

perform, and no one can do it for him. Whether you swing the cradle, bind the sheaves, or follow the reapers, God holds you responsible for the faithful discharge of the duties of your station. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." There is no unimportant work in the Master's vineyard. While our first interests are at home, our anxious eye will rest, occasionally, upon the large field at the South, so white to the harvest, with only here and there a reaper. Before the war the colored preacher at the South was a man of unquestioned dignity and authority, — at least among his constituents. He was the authority upon all questions of a public, religious or secular character. The people loved and revered their preacher, and looked up to him as a man "*sent from God.*" But then the subjects of the cruel institution were too far removed from the lamp of knowledge to obtain what they so much longed for. There was an impassable gulf between them and the fair land of learning and culture.

But thanks be to that Wise Being, whom they did not seek in vain, that the fountains of learning are unsealed, and whosoever will, let him come, and take of these waters freely! And now, during this transition period, the pulpit among our people is to be the great educator of the masses. American politics will tend rather to pull our people down, except they lift them up. As a minister of the Gospel, as a member of that great race whose future, as yet, is beyond the interpretation of human wisdom, and as one whose life is laid

upon the altar of the common interests of my people, I cannot be insensible to their interests, whenever or wherever presented. I hope to see the day when the four and one-half millions of our brethren will be emancipated from the bondage of ignorance and sin; with churches and schools in every city, town, village and hamlet. And I expect it before long too; for they are making marvellous progress now.

I expect to see missionary societies, under the management of colored men, sending forth missionaries to evangelize Africa. It has been proved, through a long series of years, that the white man cannot endure the climate of Africa. My heart loves that land, and my soul is proud of it. It has been the dream of my youth that that country would be saved by the colored people of this country. And my heart is more hopeful to-day than at any previous period.

That day will come! Her chains shall be severed by the sword of civilization and liberty! Science will penetrate her densest forests, climb her loftiest mountains, and discover her richest treasures. The sun of righteousness and the star of peace shall break upon her sin-clouded vision, and smile upon her renewed households. The anthem of the Redeemer's advent will float through her forests and be echoed by her mountains. Those dusky children of the desert who wander and plunder will settle to quiet occupations of industry. Gathering themselves into villages, plying the labors of handicraft and agriculture, they will become a well-disciplined society, instead of being a roving, barbarous

horde. The Sabbath bells will summon from scattered cottages, smiling populations, linked together by friendship, and happy in all the sweetness of domestic charities. Thus, the glory of her latter day shall be greater than at the beginning, "and Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God."

III. THE FRUIT OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION.

"And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."

No work is so important and vital in its results as the work assigned the Church of Christ. Its results cannot well be measured here. They are infinite, eternal, and therefore must be thrown into the divine balance. It is a matter that we would do well to consider. The text says, "and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." Just think, brethren, — we are not dealing with the temporal, or earthly, but with the eternal and immortal! Our work, begun here, ends only in eternity, when we must render an account of our stewardship.

If we were only able to estimate the value of a single soul, how zealous we would be in the work to which we are called; and how tenderly and touchingly would we recite the story of the cross, and tell the tale of Christ's overmastering love! Centuries may grow apace, tribes may perish, cities may rise and fall, and even empires, whose boast is their duration, may crumble back to dust; but the soul lives on. The ocean, that rolls its lazy lengths along these shores, or

tumbles in aimless fury from pole to pole, will one day dry up from the heat. The mountains, that pierce yonder blue sky, often hung with beautiful clouds, will fly for fear from the presence of Him who is to judge the world, and run down as wax. The sun and the moon and the stars will fly from their course, and be added, as fuel, to this already burning, rocking and confused world ; but, above all this ruin and consternation, the immortal soul of man shall rise to be assigned to deathless misery or endless happiness. How important, then, is our work, brethren ! We are " gathering fruit to life eternal."

IV. THE REWARD OF THE CHURCH.

" And he that reapeth receiveth wages."

Emerson says, in his essay on Compensation, I have wanted to write an essay on compensation ever since I was a boy, because, he adds, it is such a fruitful subject. Then he goes on to find fault with the clergy because they preach eternal retribution. He insists that every man will get his reward in this world ; that every wrong will be punished. To my mind there is nothing so apparent in this world as the disproportion of rewards. The undeserving often get the reward of the deserving ; the innocent suffer, and the meritorious are unremembered. Wherein does this disproportion come ? Is it traceable to God ? Or is it the result of chance ? It is neither one nor both of these. It is owing to the sinfulness and ignorance of man ; his inability, or rather his unwillingness to ac-

knowledge virtue and ability when he sees them. The wicked rule quite as often as the righteous; the saint is as liable to lose his goods in the conflagration as the sinner; the unjust are often as much appreciated as the just; many a man of merit is unnoticed and unappreciated. But this disproportion of reward is only the human side of this question. God is just. Not a single case of merit will escape his rewarding mercy, or of demerit, his scrutinizing justice. Every little deed of kindness will be rewarded in the day of final reckoning. Not a benediction upon the poor, not a smile or kind word to the erring or obscure, not a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple, that shall not receive their equal reward.

In that day when we all stand before the Great White Throne, and that sister and brother, who were the feeblest of the flock, will come to the Master and begin to say: "Lord, when saw we thee hungering and fed thee, or thirsting and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came to thee? And the King will answer and say to them, Verily I say to you, inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it to me." Such is to be the reward of all those whose prayer is, "Thy kingdom come," and whose lives are spent in the furtherance of the Gospel.

V. THE FINAL REJOICING.

“ That both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.”

When the noon-tide dust and summer heat are over, and the golden grain of harvest is safely garnered, what joy among the weary harvesters ! The hands so weary from toil can rest. The anxious hearts that have beaten at the sight of every darkening cloud can sink into the calmness of conscious success, and the eyes that watched the seed when it first was scattered under cloudy skies and amid chilly winds, will at last feast themselves upon the golden harvest, the fruit of months of toil and anguish.

So it is with those who gather souls. After the heat of this spiritual conflict, after we have sowed and watered with our tears, after the pain and waiting, the watching and praying, we will be permitted to return to our Father's house, “ bringing our sheaves with us.” Christ will not keep us from rejoicing. Every face will be lighted with victory and rejoicing ; every heart will beat in unison with the divine heart ; every tongue will be rapturous with praise ; every voice sweet with the melodies of heaven ; every eye lit with the glory of the mansions prepared by a Saviour's love ; and every finger, touching, as by magic, the lyres of the redeemed. The mother will meet children, the brother sister, the husband wife. There pastor and people will meet. There, too, will meet, those who were enemies in the flesh. Those who toiled and bore

the burden and heat of the day will be there and rest their weary souls. There will be indivisible fellowship of greeting and rejoicing. The soul warned and saved by a faithful pastor will greet him with joy in its heart, and thanksgiving upon its lips. The consciousness that we have been able to save one soul will be heaven itself. Our rejoicing will not be succeeded by pain.

“ No chilling winds, or poisonous breath,
Can reach that healthful shore ;
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.

O'er all those wide, extended plains
Shines one eternal day ;
There God the Son forever reigns,
And scatters night away.”

Our rejoicing will be permanent, our joy pure, and our voices never will tire in their service of love. As to the degree of our love in heaven, our rejoicing and our praise, what tongue can tell, what pen describe ! Heaven's high arches will give back the sweet songs that will rise from the lips of that “ company that no man can number.”

Let no doubt darken your hope, for

“ The work which his goodness began,
The arm of his strength will complete ;
His promise is yea and Amen,
And never was forfeited yet ;
Things future, or things that are now, —
Not all things below, or above,
Can make him his purpose forego,
Or sever your soul from his love.”

Yes, brother, he will keep us until the day of rejoicing. Not the humblest of his flock will be lost. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal life; and they shall never perish, nor shall any one pluck them out of my hand." Could you wish for stronger language? Christ declares that he *knows* us; that he will give us *eternal life*; that we shall *never perish*, and that *no one* shall *pluck* us out of his *hand*. Yes, we will be able to rejoice together at last. When the harvest is over, when we gather our sheaves, and bind them together, we will shout, with united voices, "*Harvest home*." "And God will wipe away every tear from your eyes, and death shall be no more, nor shall mourning, nor crying, nor pain be any more, because the former things are passed away."

CONCLUSION.

The mission of this church is great, important, and fraught with the most vital interests. No man or woman can separate themselves from this mission. No one can be indifferent to the interests of this church and please God. It is not a work the glory of which is to rest upon any individual; unto the Lord belongeth all glory. "So, then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." If any work is accomplished in this place, it will be due to our nearness to the Master.

Each of us, without prejudice, ought to enter with heartiness into this great work before us, —

I. Because our individual happiness and good are involved.

No community can escape the influence of the smallest vice. If there is suffering in a country, every person, to a greater or less degree, must suffer. The power of human sympathy is almost incarnate. When that great city of the West was burning, the wires flashed the intelligence all over the civilized world, and all countries were brought together in inseparable fellowship of grief. The whole world felt the great throb of pain. Cities and States, churches and theatres, rose up spontaneously to aid their needy sister. The steam engine struggled westward with its burden of provisions and clothing, the gifts of a sympathizing people; while the telegraph bore messages of love and sympathy from every part of the world.

No evil can befall this church that will not send a thrill of pain to the heart of every member. No triumph come, no work achieved, no soul saved, but what each of you will feel a sense of dignity and personal honor. We are creatures of sympathy. No man can live by himself, as a rule; for he who lives by himself must die by himself. Man was created for society. We are dependent beings. So remember, brethren, that all we do as a church will be accredited to us as a church, be it good or bad. Remember that our interests are linked together.

We ought to enter into this work with heartiness, —

II. *Because the good of the race as well as of the church is involved.*

Our enemies have a very false and wicked way of proving our bad qualities : John is indolent, John is a colored man, therefore, all colored men are indolent. This is the way they argue about everything concerning our race. And since they insist upon this fallacious argument, let us make them carry it out on the other side. The Twelfth Baptist Church is an excellent church; the Twelfth Baptist Church is a colored church; therefore, all colored churches are excellent churches. They must do this, or we force them to a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Remember, brethren, that if we are faithful as church-members, as citizens, as husbands, and as men, we will share our honors with all our brethren throughout the country. We are honored by the deeds of our countrymen. What Frenchman is not proud of Napoleon Bonaparte? What Englishman is not proud that his countrymen are Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, Pitt, Wilberforce and Livingstone? What American does not utter, with conscious fondness and pride, the names of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Clay, Webster and Sumner? These names shed their glory upon the humblest of America's sons. And the time is not distant, when we will have men of our own race whose names will be fragrant and brilliant for good works, — known in every household. So remember that every achievement adds not only to the individual, but to the race.

We should enter into this work with heartiness, because,

III. Of the certainty and grandeur of the results of our mission.

The brave vessel that bears the rich cargo to the merchant who has paid his gold may be overtaken by a storm, and dashed to pieces by the angry waves, and her costly merchandise scattered upon the bosom of a troubled sea. The gardener may return to the trees that he has pruned and cared for, and find "nothing thereon but leaves." The husbandman who has sowed and cultivated may look for rich grain, but find none. But not so in the department of our spiritual labors. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater : so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." This is the declaration of One who cannot lie, and whose word is as firm as the everlasting hills.

You may sow in tears, but you will reap in joy. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou *shalt* find it after many days." No doubt or uncertainty can attend our work. The conditions are sure, the results likewise will be sure. Heaven and earth may pass away, but not one jot of God's word will fail.

"Fear not; I am with thee, oh, be not dismayed,
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

How grand will be the result of the work given to Christ's church to perform! It will be sublime! It must have been a splendid sight, in the days of Roman glory, to see Cæsar in his triumphant car, attended by generals and princes, while behind followed an uncounted host of soldiers with streaming banners, representing every nationality on the then known globe. It must have been an inspiring sight to see Hannibal unfurl his banner upon the hoary brow of the Alps. It must have been a sublime moment to Alexander when he sat down and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. It must have been a touching sight that made Xerxes weep, — that greatest of all earthly armies, marching in review. It must have been a grand sight to see General Sherman at the head of that triumphant army moving through the avenues of the national capitol, that had pressed the foe from Atlanta to the sea. But the entrance of Cæsar into Rome; Hannibal throwing out his banner upon the Alps; Alexander weeping for other worlds to conquer; Xerxes reviewing his millions of soldiers; Sherman at the head of a victorious Union army; — all these must pale before the grand consummation of the kingdom of Christ! What is the car of Cæsar to the chariot car of Christ?

“ For He whose car the winds are,
And the clouds the dust that wait upon his sultry march,
Shall visit earth in mercy,
Shall descend propitious in his chariot,
Girt with love.”

What will the unfurling of Hannibal's banner upon

the Alps be, to the unfurling of the blood-stained banner of the cross of Christ upon the heights of eternal glory? What will the weeping of Alexander be to the rejoicing of the redeemed that all sin is conquered, and death and hell forever chained? Doubtless the grand review of Xerxes' army at Mount Athos was the grandest that ever took place in this world. But it cannot be compared with the review of that ransomed host, more numerous than the sands upon the sea-shore, and for multitude greater than the stars of heaven. The sight of Sherman at the head of his army will be tame in contrast with the sight of Christ at the head of his sacramental host.

There will not be a nationality or tongue under the sun that will not be represented in heaven. The saints from Abel to Moses; from Paul to Luther; and from Wesley and Roger Williams to the end of time, will be there. Very few of that army that went into Greece ever returned to Persia; but not a single soldier will be missing from the ranks of the redeemed. Not a scar or bruise will be found upon their enfranchised limbs; not a faint or sick man in the whole multitude; not a sad face to look into; not a stammering tongue to be heard.

Brethren, let these truths stimulate us to action, and quicken our love for the Master's work. No more folding of the arms; no more closing of the eyes; no more stretching upon our beds of spiritual sloth. Let us up and into the harvest field. The precious grain

is waving under heavenly breezes, and the sun of righteousness is ripening it for the Master's use.

“ Do not, then, stand idly waiting
For some greater work to do;
Fortune is a lazy goddess,
She will never come to you.
Go and toil in any vineyard,
Do not fear to do or dare,
If you want a field of labor,
You can find it anywhere.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIELD.

THE Rev. Galusha Anderson, D.D., of Brooklyn, N. Y., said, in a speech before the Newton alumni, — “The only thing I have to regret, is that Williams is to be retained in Boston. I wish he were going South, where he would find a larger field.”

It is true that the field at the South is vast, with only here and there a reaper. It is true that in the South I could speak to thousands, while in Boston I get only the ears of a few hundred. But the field in Boston is, nevertheless, an important one; full of interest, and laden with results, good or bad. This field, well cultivated, will furnish the “one that shall chase a thousand, and the two that shall put ten thousand to flight.” The influence and good of a well-organized church here in Boston will be co-extensive with the farthest South. A healthy, vigorous, intelligent church, here in the very centre of benevolent activities, will do much to temper the giving of those who are disposed to aid our needy brethren at the South. It would be natural for them to conclude, that, if a church here in Boston were ignorant and inactive, a church in the South would be doubly so. For we must remember, that our responsibility increases with our light and opportunities.

Here is a church with about seven hundred members, with about two hundred young men and women who attend regularly the services of the church; while there are hundreds, right under the shadow of this house of worship, who never look into a church from year to year. We live in the midst of a "field white to harvest," and the heathen are at our doors. Our church building will hold about five hundred; our membership is seven hundred, while there are our congregation, and the many who never attend church at all. You may ask why our white churches do not take them in, and I answer, they do not wish to be bothered with them! Since I entered this field, several city pastors have asked me, "Why don't you look after your children?" and said, "There are quite a number of your folks in our church."

Now I would like to know what is to be done with that class of colored people in Boston, that is floating, and belong to "*nobody's church*;" who go to "*nobody's*" church? A very few of them are comfortable in our white churches. And if the churches do not care to be bothered with them, I see only one alternative, and that is, that I bother myself about their spiritual welfare and material prosperity. Many times I am called to the bedside of the sick and dying, in this vicinity, and find the persons not even cognizant of the fact of the existence of such a personage as the city missionary. They belong to "*nobody's*" church; they have attended "*nobody's*" church. Rev. Mr. "*Nobody*," their pastor, has never called.

And this condition of things is not growing better. Every day the South is sending her sons and daughters North. As a rule they are members of a church, or possessed of Baptist proclivities. They attend our church for a while, but owing to a lack of room, and, perhaps, too often so, the many paths of vice in this city that take hold on hell, they, being out from under pastoral restraint, soon find themselves far from the Saviour.

We must remember, also, that the political, social interests of the colored people are inseparably linked with their spiritual. The most potent educator of the colored people will be the pulpit. It was so during the infancy of the colonies of Massachusetts; it is true to-day in relation to my people. And whatever can be done to make the people feel the pulpit, should not remain undone.

A MISTAKEN IDEA.

No one who has attended Sabbath services at the Twelfth Baptist Church can fail to see the necessity of a larger house. No one who is acquainted with West End can doubt the need of missionary work there. But the question is, how can a larger house be secured? and how can the proper missionary work be conducted, and by whom?

A great many people have thought that the late Rev. L. A. Grimes received a large salary; that the church was "well to-do;" and that they did not stand in need of public charity. Not so. Nothing is far-

ther from the truth than this. When the Rev. Mr. Grimes first settled with the Society, he received \$100 per annum. In 1849, or 1850, his salary was raised to \$300; in 1863 it was raised to \$400, and it was not long previous to his death, when his salary was raised to \$1000, which sum he was getting at the time of his death.

The members of the church are very poor. Nineteen-twentieths of them came from the South. Coming to an old city where property is high, and often difficult to obtain, few of them, yes, infinitely few, have been able to secure a competency. The congregation of most every church in the city, doubtless, is about two-thirds women. As a rule those women are "well-to-do;" but take it in my congregation, and you find that, as a rule, the women are poor. And, furthermore, you will find this class of people are burdened more than those who ought to do more than they do.

It is true the people have much to learn concerning their financial obligations. The more intelligent we become, the more benevolent will be our hearts, and the more cheerful our giving. But no one can find fault with the Twelfth Baptist Church, when they take into consideration its extreme poverty, etc. It has been the custom of the church to give \$100 per annum to the Freedman Fund of the Home Mission Society. They have contributed liberally to the "American Baptist Consolidated Missionary Convention," managed by colored men. In addition to these calls they have contributed cheerfully to the many objects of charity brought to their notice.

PRESENT WANTS OF THE CHURCH.

During the whole of the year the church has been uncomfortably crowded. The aisles have been filled with camp-stools, the gallery filled, and many have willingly sat upon the balustrades. Even the pulpit stairs have been occupied, while many have been compelled to go away, unable even to get standing room. This is no exaggeration; this has not been the exception, but the rule, during the entire year.

Some time during the Spring, the trustees purchased the property just to the west of the church edifice, with the view of enlarging the church. The property consists of two tenement houses, the income of which brings us a small surplus after all taxes on the property and expenses are paid. The property was secured for \$7,100, and we owe \$6,200. The old church property we value at about 35 or \$40,000.

During the spring the ladies of the church held sewing circles, and expect to open a fair this Fall, for the benefit of the church. The pastor has started a sinking fund that will bring about \$80 per month, when it is fairly in operation. We are doing everything within our power to remove the small debt incurred in the purchase of the above-mentioned property.

The Gospel must be given to the people. We are too poor to build a church to accommodate our communicants, much less for the hundreds outside the pale of the church. Must we abandon the glorious work to preach the Gospel "to the poor"? Must this large field lie untilled, and be surrendered up to the thorns

and briers of sin? Must the hundreds of young men who reside in this neighborhood be without a Sabbath home, and perish right in the midst of the people of God? Shall the well-begun work of "Father Grimes" crumble, and his well-earned fame as a champion of freedom, and as a friend of the poor, remain unguarded? Shall the cause of our blessed Redeemer droop, because his poor cannot maintain it? O! brethren, friends, and lovers of humanity, I feel that our cause will meet with favor from you. The Christian public will not suffer the church that has proved such a blessing to the colored people, to fail. It might be said with equal justice, as Hon. George S. Hillard said in a letter in 1858: "I should regard the breaking up of this church — Twelfth Baptist — as a serious misfortune to them, — the colored people, — and through them to the community."

We make this appeal to the benevolent public in the hope that they will hear and grant our prayer, and that, speedily, the funds necessary to the enlargement of our crowded house may be secured, and "unto the poor the Gospel preached."

I will be glad to preach or lecture in any of the churches in New England; will then make a full statement of the condition and wants of the church.

All contributions and correspondence should be directed to the pastor,

REV. GEORGE W. WILLIAMS,

26 Auburn street, Boston, Mass.

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